

Serial No.: 10/087,660

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-20 and 24-26 are pending in the application. Claim 1 has been amended herein. Entry of the amendment and favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

I. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1, 3-10, 12-17, 19 AND 20 UNDER 35 USC §103(a)

Claims 1, 3-10, 12-17, 19 and 20 remain rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) based on *Acosta et al.* in view of *Funada et al.* Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested for at least the following reasons.

Applicants argued in their previous response how the present invention is concerned with protrusions that affect alignment not only on the *surface* of a liquid crystal layer, but also within the *bulk* of the liquid crystal layer. (See, e.g., Response filed 2/20/04, page 7, last full paragraph). The Examiner replied as follows:

... Applicants argued that Acosta et al. and Funada et al. are both concerned with alignment layers for affecting alignment at the surface of a liquid crystal layer; on the other hand, the present invention is concerned with affecting alignment within the bulk of a liquid crystal layer. The Examiner recognizes patentable features of the present invention; however, the features are not clearly recited in the claims to differentiate with Prior Arts, and the combination of Acosta et al. and Funada et al. still meet all limitations recited in the claims. (O.A. mailed 5/19/04, p. 8).

In an effort to facilitate favorable prosecution, applicants have amended claim 1 herein to recite expressly the features of the protrusions affecting alignment both near the *surface* and within the *bulk* of the liquid crystal. Thus, claim 1 now clearly recites the features acknowledged by the Examiner as being patentable. Support for the amendment to claim 1 is found, for example, in Figs. 4-5 of the present application and the accompanying written description.

Acosta et al. and *Funada et al.* each fail to teach or suggest protrusions to affect alignment near the surface and within the bulk of the liquid crystal layer as recited in amended claim 1. As a result, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 together with the rejection of the claims dependent therefrom is respectfully requested.

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II. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 11 AND 18 UNDER 35 USC §103(a)

Claims 11 and 18 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) based on *Acosta et al.* in view of *Funada et al.*, and further in view of *Ulrich et al.* Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested for at least the following reasons.

Claims 11 and 18 each depend from claim 1 either directly or indirectly, and can be distinguished over *Acosta et al.* and *Funada et al.* for at least the same reasons. Moreover, *Ulrich et al.* does not make up for the above-discussed deficiencies in *Acosta et al.* and *Funada et al.* Thus, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

III. CONCLUSION

Accordingly, all claims are believed to be allowable and the application is believed to be in condition for allowance. A prompt action to such end is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner feel that a telephone interview would be helpful to facilitate favorable prosecution of the above-identified application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number provided below.

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Should a petition for an extension of time be necessary for the timely reply to the outstanding Office Action (or if such a petition has been made and an additional extension is necessary), petition is hereby made and the Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees (including additional claim fees) to Deposit Account No. 18-0988.

Respectfully submitted,

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